

ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL PROTECTION WEEK 2026

Empowered Lives, Resilient Futures

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ADB

SESSION 12

Systems Reboot: Social Protection in a Digital World

MODERATOR



Saurav Bhattarai

**Team Lead, openIMIS Initiative and Coordination Desk, Global Alliances for Social Protection
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)**

Saurav Bhattarai leads the openIMIS Initiative team at the GIZ Global Alliances for Social Protection. Saurav has been designing and implementing digital social protection and health tools and projects since 2013, primarily focused on the use of Digital Public Goods.

SPEAKERS and PANELIST



Serkan Bozkurt

**Head of Department of Cooperation with International and Voluntary Organizations
Ministry of Family and Social Services
Government of Türkiye**

Serkan Bozkurt leads policy development, institutional coordination, and international cooperation to strengthen Türkiye's social protection system. He has represented Türkiye in high-level international forums and worked closely with the World Bank, European Union, OIC, OECD and United Nations agencies like UNICEF and WFP on social assistance, poverty reduction, and socio-economic development. Mr. Bozkurt holds a bachelor's degree from Boğaziçi University and completed postgraduate studies in Applied International Development at the University of Reading, United Kingdom.



Elshan Dadashov
Head of Division
Social Security Policy Department
Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
of the Population
Government of Azerbaijan

An experienced public sector professional, Elshan Dadashov graduated from the Azerbaijan State University of Economics in 2000 and has been serving in the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its affiliated institutions since 2006. Over the course of a distinguished career, he has contributed to the development and implementation of labour, employment, and social protection initiatives aimed at strengthening social welfare and workforce development in Azerbaijan.



Saeeda Umar
Managing Director
MINDCo
Government of Maldives

Saeeda Umar serves as the Managing Director of Maldives Innovation and Digital Company Limited (MINDCo), a state-owned enterprise mandated to advance the Government of Maldives' digital transformation agenda. MINDCo serves as the Government's digital and innovation arm, developing and operating digital public infrastructure and citizen-centred government services in support of the Maldives 2.0 national digital transformation agenda.

Under her leadership, MINDCo is advancing the development and implementation of Maldives' unified digital government services platform GOV.MV, and sector wide platforms including Tradian, the country's National Single Window for cross-border trade, MIHIS an integrated national health information system and Onefleet for transport sector regulatory services. These initiatives are intended to improve access to public services, strengthen interoperability across government, support data and evidence-based citizen service enhancements and address the unique service-delivery challenges of a geographically dispersed island nation.

Her experience provides a practical perspective on the role of public digital institutions in building inclusive, interoperable and resilient digital systems. At the Asia-Pacific Social Protection Week 2026, she will bring insights from the Maldives' digital transformation journey and the opportunities and challenges associated with developing digital public infrastructure in a small island developing state.



Anita Mittal
Component Lead
Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI)

Anita Mittal leads the Digital Convergence Initiative which strives to build global consensus building for interoperable and integrated social protection information systems. She has extensive experience in design and implementation of identification systems for World Bank and e-Governance projects in India. She was involved in publication of several open standards and interoperability framework while leading the National e-egovernance standards project for the government of India. She is a certified Project Management Professional with a bachelors and master's degree in Computer Science and Engineering.